

# BRAVO ZULU



**SSgt. Patrick Najmulski, Cpl. Aaron Azike, Cpl. Justin Bennett, and LCpl. Daniel Conner**

## HMM-265 (REIN)

On a recent Western Pacific MEU(SOC) deployment, these Marines were assigned to a forward arming refueling point (FARP). As a Super Cobra attack helicopter landed for hot refueling, these Marines noticed the AH-1W's main-rotor mast and tail rotor wrapped in TOW-missile wire. They immediately signaled the pilots, who were unaware of the problem, to shut down.

Once the pilots shut down the helo, SSgt. Najmulski, Cpl. Azike, Cpl. Bennett, and LCpl. Conner removed 150 yards of copper wire and assisted the maintenance crews in the ensuing repairs. Their quick reaction saved further damage and possibly the aircrew's lives.

**Cpl. Alex Ganzel**

## HMX-1

While inspecting a CH-53E, Cpl. Ganzel found a small paint crack on the horizontal-stabilizer support tube. Although it looked superficial, he summoned a CDI to examine the site more thoroughly.

When the surface layer of paint was removed, a 7-inch crack was revealed in the aircraft's structure, which showed signs of separating. Because of the crack's location, it would have failed in flight at some point—had it gone unnoticed. Corporal Ganzel didn't let that happen, and his swift action prevented a more serious event.



**Elijah Jefferson**

## SSSI Pensacola

During a routine daily inspection on a T-2C, Mr. Jefferson found a paint crack near the rib of wing station 115 and in the upper section of the starboard wheelwell. He is a night-check plane captain for Sikorsky Support Services, Inc. (SSSI) and immediately called for an SSSI airframes troubleshooter.

When the airframe technician removed the paint in the immediate vicinity of the rib, two quarter-inch cracks were found on either side of a bolt. A subsequent NDI of the area revealed a third crack behind the bolt, meaning the rib could have failed, and an aircraft could have been lost.

## AME2 David Schuster

# VAQ-135

While troubleshooting a squadron aircraft before a night launch on board USS *Nimitz* (CVN-68), Petty Officer Schuster noticed an aircraft director bring two tractor operators dangerously close to the port intake of an EA-6B's turning engine. Just as the trainees' jerseys and goggles were being pulled into the intake, he grabbed his two shipmates and pulled them to safety.

Petty Officer Schuster also saved another mishap; he noticed a loose cap during a LOX-bottle inspection in an aircraft birdcage. He found the metal cap lying just behind the bottle. His actions prevented foreign-object damage and a possible LOX-bottle explosion.



## AM2 Leon Johnson

# HM-14

While troubleshooting a vibration discrepancy on aircraft 554, Petty Officer Johnson noticed two damaged main-rotor-head dampers in the area of the aft bleed port. He immediately sought advice from a QAR. Further investigation revealed the dampers were cracked.

Petty Officer Johnson also found a loose "B-nut" on the engine-start pump while troubleshooting a leak on a different aircraft. During this same inspection, he found the No. 5, outboard damper bearing had metal-to-metal contact. A 2-inch-by-3-inch area was pitted, and the bearings were worn beyond limits.



## AM1(AW) Wilbur May

# VF-143

Aircraft 100 was moved to the hangar bay to change a high-time, nose-strut shock on the F-14B. Once the strut had been changed, a CDI and QAR inspected it. The aircraft then was jacked for a gear swing to comply with a 224-day inspection.

The landing-gear system and doors worked 4.0 for five cycles. Then came the emergency landing-gear-extension check, which also checked 4.0. The airframers reset the landing-gear handle, emergency air-release valve, and landing-control module. On the third of five cycles of the gear, the port outboard door prematurely started to close. During normal operation, the outboard door closes four inches and stops until the landing-gear strut is in the wheelwell, and then it fully will close.

Petty Officer May told the cockpit operator to put down the gear, and he used proper training and attention to detail to prevent a mishap, which could have caused untimely and major damage.

